



News from Congressman **Tom Lantos**

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PRESIDENT BUSH SIGNS LANTOS LEGISLATION IMPOSING COMPREHENSIVE SANCTIONS ON BURMA *New Law Prohibits All Imports From Burma*

Washington, DC – President George Bush today signed legislation authored by Congressman Tom Lantos, the Ranking Democratic Member of the House International Relations Committee, to impose comprehensive sanctions against the brutal Burmese dictatorship. The legislation was approved by overwhelming margins in the House and Senate two weeks ago.

Lantos introduced legislation in the last Congress to imposed an import ban on Burma, and as Co-Chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, has fought to raise awareness of the egregious human rights situation in Burma since the late 1980's, as well as Aung San Suu Kyi's fight for freedom.

"Burma's ruling thugs grossly miscalculated when they attacked Aung San Suu Kyi and other supporters of democracy," Lantos said. "Instead of putting the issue of democracy and freedom in Burma on the backburner, the Rangoon regime has brought world condemnation upon itself. With this brutal campaign against freedom, the national reconciliation process sponsored by the United Nations is dead."

"The sanctions legislation signed into law today by President Bush is a tough measure, but no tougher than Burma's ruling thugs deserve," Lantos said. "The Burmese Government had two years to deal seriously with Aung San Suu Kyi, and instead, they viciously attacked the Nobel Laureate."

The Lantos legislation prohibits the importation into the United States of any article which is a product of Burma. The sanctions go into effect one month from today, although the President may waive these sanctions once of series of human rights, democracy and counter-narcotics requirements have been met.

"United States imports of Burmese products have been bankrolling Burma's brutal dictatorship," Lantos said. "Burma's major exporters are either owned by the ruling thugs, or are intricately tied to the government. This bill will hit Burma's dictators where it hurts – in their checking accounts."

The bill also freezes the assets of the Burmese regime and its leadership in the United States, reiterates existing U.S. policy to oppose lending to Burma in international financial institutions, and strengthens the current visa ban on former and present leadership of the Burmese government or its political arm, the Union Solidarity Development Association.